

Literature and Psychology

The News Letter of the Conference on Literature and Psychology of the Modern Language Association

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A cloudy veil stretches over the abyss of my nature. I have, however, no love of secrecy and darkness. I am glad to think that God sees through my heart, and, if any angel has power to penetrate into it, he is welcome to know everything that is there. Yes, and so may any mortal who is capable of sympathy, and therefore worthy to come into my depths. But he must find his own way there. I can neither guide nor enlighten him. It is this involuntary reserve, I suppose, that has given objectivity to my writings; and when people think I am pouring myself out in a tale or essay, I am merely telling what is common to human nature, not what is peculiar to myself.

—Hawthorne. The American Notebooks

LITERATURE AND PSYCHOLOGY is now one of the publications abstracted in Psychological Abstracts. This announcement comes at a most opportune time, for the reprint of our leading articles and bibliographies from the 1951-1952 issues is now ready for distribution. An order blank is included with this issue, and the excellent material which has been out of print for many months is now available to our subscribers, old and new. The format of the re-issue represents a considerable improvement over the original publication, both in appearance and in accuracy and utility.

The leading article in this issue represents a larger work which will, we believe, be of great importance in our field. Its author, Simon O. Lesser, after an unusual career in private industry, in government service, and in college teaching has been at work for some time on the monumental project of defining and explaining "the appeal of fiction" in terms that are at once soundly critical and profoundly psychodynamic. He has been assisted in this project by a grant from the Humanities Division of the Rockefeller Foundation. The section which he has allowed us to reproduce contains some of the basic theses and contentions of his work. The complete work, portions of which we have been privileged to examine, will be replete with brilliant and cogent illustrations. We feel that we owe our readers this much of a preview of an important document and that we may, in this way, make amends, by this somewhat more complete statement, for the garbled fashion in which our transcription of Mr. Lesser's first communication caused it to be published in our last issue.

SOME UNCONSCIOUS ELEMENTS IN THE RESPONSE TO FICTION

[This excerpt is taken from the author's work in progress entitled The Appeal of Fiction. It is a portion of Chapter VII, "Response to Fiction - A General Sketch."]

Three unconscious processes can be distinguished in response to fiction. Of course, they do not occur in isolation, but in admixture with one another and with conscious psychic operations.

The first process is part of our "spectator" reaction to fiction. It is basically concerned with perception and understanding. "The heart has its reasons which the mind knows not," and the unconscious can immediately and effortlessly understand certain things which our conscious intelligence would find puzzling and even inexplicable.

What kinds of things are likely to be unconsciously rather than consciously apprehended? In answering, we should be careful to exclude things which though ostensibly hidden are really meant to be grasped by the intellect—for example, the real motives for a certain action as contrasted with the explanation offered by a character blind to the forces driving him, or dishonest reasons advanced to deceive someone. In such cases as these, fiction writers want us to be aware of the truth. The things which are meant to be apprehended unconsciously they are usually unaware of themselves—or, to be more accurate, they are unaware of their unconscious significance. Increasingly, however, now that the knowledge of depth psychology is spreading, writers may consciously weave into their fiction things which they intend to be unconsciously understood. It seems safer to develop a definition in terms of the reader.

In general, it is the things which arouse anxiety, directly or indirectly, if consciously perceived which are likely to be apprehended unconsciously. It is not possible to specify the exact things, because these differ from reader to reader. People differ widely in their ability to tolerate anxiety and in the things which cause them anxiety, and any given person may change in both respects at different times. "Economic" considerations complicate matters: isolated instances in which warded-off impulses secure gratification might be consciously observed, and accepted, because they mobilized relatively small amounts of anxiety. Yet these very things would be more likely to be unconsciously apprehended if they threatened to fit into an overall interpretation which was unacceptable to the ego, and a potential source of serious anxiety. A selective principle influences our understanding: we try to "repress," to keep from awareness, those perceptions which might cause us appreciable discomfort or pain. Of course, we are not always successful in doing so. An inept writer might compel us to take conscious note of things we would prefer to understand unconsciously.

Events or other aspects of fiction which have deep roots in the unconscious are especially likely to be unconsciously apprehended. In fiction, as in life, almost everything which happens is unconsciously determined to some extent. What is astonishing is the preoccupation of fiction with actions which are decisively determined by unconscious factors. The major actions of most of the stories we have considered, and of a large portion of all the world's fiction, are so determined. Of course, unconscious springs of action are not always so deeply buried or so objectionable that they cannot be consciously apprehended; and in the relatively small body of fiction which appeals to us primarily as spectators the perception of ignoble motives animating the characters, from whom we feel disassociated, is ordinarily a source of pleasure.

In most cases, however, conscious recognition of repudiated motives for conduct would arouse anxiety. These motives are no more acceptable to us than they are to the characters who conceal them.

Episodes which remind us of painful experiences or of aspects of our present situation about which we feel anxiety are also likely to be understood unconsciously. Empirical evidence indicates that such episodes also tend to be "forgotten" with comparative rapidity; in some cases, doubtless they have not so much been thrust from the mind as denied the opportunity to register upon it. In some instances, story elements which come too close to some psychic sore spot are found incomprehensible, or are distorted, by readers who intellectually are quite capable of understanding them. A study conducted by Dr. Martha Wolfenstein of reactions of four-, five-, and six-year-old children and their mothers to a story called "Sally and the Baby and the Rempatan" illustrates this dramatically. The children, for whom the story provided a covert and acceptable way of expressing and working through hostility toward an expected second child, understood the story's central fantasy better than their mothers, who, identifying with the pregnant fictional mother, felt threatened by the very emotions the story was intended to arouse¹. Clearly, we are willing to go to great lengths not to become consciously aware of meanings which would cause us pain. But the storyteller must cooperate: when he deals with potentially upsetting material, he must keep part of our minds in darkness on what he is about.

Frequently the connections between various actions and meanings which run through an entire story would arouse anxiety if brought to awareness, and are left to the unconscious to apprehend. There can be no question that in response to fiction the unconscious engages in a kind of activity which we may think of as a prerogative of consciousness: it ferrets out connections, draws inferences and establishes connections; it synthesizes its observations. When we read Hamlet, for example, it is the unconscious which is likely to take note of the contrast between the speed and sureness with which Hamlet acts on a half-dozen occasions and his powerlessness to proceed with that one action he has pledged himself to perform: the contrast between his dilatoriness and the speed with which Laertes acts in a similar situation; and countless other things which betray the secret sources of Hamlet's inability to carry out his mission. By piecing together and interpreting such observations the unconscious may penetrate to an entire level of meaning—or numerous levels of meaning—to which, during reading at least, the conscious mind is blind.

In response to a story as a unified whole, no less than in our understanding of many of its component parts, unconscious perception plays an indispensable role. The things the unconscious perceives have to be communicated, or we miss the deepest source of pleasure procurable through reading fiction. They have to be communicated unconsciously, or they will backfire and arouse painful anxiety.

The second and third kinds of unconscious response to fiction constitute a kind of activity, though of course the activity is psychic and not actual, and tolerated by the ego on that account. They are forms of response in which we are actors and not merely spectators. In the first of these "active" forms of response, we unconsciously participate in the stories read; in the second, we compose stories constructed upon the ones we read (or upon parts

¹ "The Impact of a Children's Story on Mothers and Children," Mono-graphs of the Society for Research in Child Development, No. 42, XI, 1946 (Washington, D. C.: National Research Council, 1947).

of them) which give us an opportunity to re-live or alter our actual experience or act out dramas revolving around our wishes and fears. The last-mentioned kind of response, the creation of stories parallel to the ones we read in which we play a part, I call analogizing.

Whereas unconscious perception supplements the cognitive activity of consciousness, unconscious participation and analogizing may be said to comprise our "action" response to fiction. We maintain the illusion that, literally or figuratively, we are simply watching a story unfold itself.

Sometimes, of course, we are doing no more than that. The storyteller may skillfully compel us to take a spectator role, or we may be too detached in our attitude toward a story to become involved in it. The most frequent cause of our remaining outside the fiction we read, however, is the failure of the storyteller to engage our interests deeply, despite his endeavor to do so and our willingness to be absorbed. Try as we may, we do not always succeed in finding fiction in which, as we sometimes put it, we can "lose ourselves." Some stories revolve around situations which do not interest us, or have characters so foreign to us that we cannot identify with them, or impress us as being precious or crude. Even when we finish stories to which we have negative reactions, we seldom become sufficiently engrossed in them for the participation responses to occur.

When we are engrossed, a great deal of evidence indicates, we imaginatively experience the entire action—ourselves act out every role. The experience is of course imaginary; it is elliptical in the extreme; it utilizes energy which is at least partially neutralized. For all these provisos, it is "real" and, in view of its speed, astonishingly complete; it includes, for example, an understanding of the unconscious significance of the acts we perform.

We do not, of course, ordinarily experience all parts of the action of a given story with the same degree of intensity. As we would expect, there are differences, in accordance with our individual nature and needs, in the completeness with which we identify with different characters and the abandon with which we participate in different episodes. What is startling, however, is how encompassing our experience usually is when we are engrossed. An intensive analysis of a twelve-year-old addict of detective stories revealed that the boy identified not only, as we would expect, with the invincible and invulnerable heroes of the stories, but, as well, with the unsympathetically presented villains, and even with the victims in their terror, suffering, and death. The boy secured the full measure of gratification, open or covert, which each of these roles afforded. The identification with the detective served to make him more secure in the face of the terror his real-life situations inspired and to protect him against some of his own impulses. The identification with the villains satisfied his repressed but powerful hostile feelings toward his uncle, his mother and others; that with the victims, an even more deeply repressed wish to be overcome by the uncle and be the passive victim of love-making conceived as a sadistic assault.¹

Many other intensive studies of response to fiction also indicate that if we can understand and empathize with some of the characters in a story, with varying degrees of candor and completeness, we can usually identify with them all. A superficial explanation is that the writer who possesses the magic to bring some of his characters to light can usually animate all of them. A more basic explanation is that all the characters are so many aspects, acknowledged

¹Edith Buxbaum, "The Role of Detective Stories in a Child's Analysis," Psychoanalytic Quarterly, X, 1941.

er unacknowledged, lived-out or repressed, of the writer—and, if we respond to the writer, of ourselves. We know how many roles besides the one we play in life possess recognized attraction. Unconsciously, we may be sure, we desire to be many people besides that paltry thing we call our "self;" we long for many of the qualities we have crushed out in shaping that self.

In the fiction which engages us, characters who have the qualities we have stunted as well as those we have cultivated are so closely linked that, like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, they can be regarded as component parts of one person. They represent dominant and recessive, supplementary and conflicting, or conscious and unconscious aspects of one role. Myshkin and Rogozhin can be regarded in this way, as can Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, Lear and the Fool, possibly Macbeth and his Lady, and, as Dr. Mark Kanzer has observed, the pursuer and the pursued in any number of stories from Les Misérables and Crime and Punishment to the tales of Sherlock Holmes. If we can understand and identify with any one member of these pairs, we can scarcely fail to identify with the other. However, one identification may be almost conscious, the other deeply buried.

All the empirical evidence I have been able to gather indicates that most people have a wide capacity for identification. Correspondence between a reader and a fictional character facilitates identification, but differences in situation, age and sex do not preclude it. Nor do differences in personality structure unless they are so pronounced that a reader finds the motivation and thought processes of a character incomprehensible.

In addition to participating vicariously in the stories in which we become absorbed, we frequently create and imaginatively act out stories structured upon them. We "analogize." We spin stories which parallel the ones we read, or particular episodes or scenes in them. These productions are of course highly elliptical. There is neither time nor need to develop them systematically.

Analogizing may involve nothing more than the recognition of a similarity between the fictional events and something which has happened to us, and a rapid re-living of the experience. Or it may involve some welcome alteration of past experience: as the long-suffering Dobbin tells off Amelia we may imagine ourselves speaking in like vein to someone who, we feel, has not sufficiently appreciated our merit and our love. Still more frequently, in all probability, analogizing takes the form of composing fantasies based upon our wishes and fears rather than our experience.

Perhaps because analogizing is so closely akin to daydreaming, of which we feel vaguely ashamed, it is rarely mentioned in reports of response to fiction. Yet few will doubt that such an activity takes place: almost every reader of fiction has probably caught himself engaging in it at one time or another. Again because of the association with daydreaming, it may not be regarded as a legitimate part of the reading experience. But analogizing should be distinguished from daydreaming. Whereas the latter uses a story only as a point of departure and gets farther and farther away from it, analogizing remains closely bound by the particular events which instigate it. It neither distracts our attention from what we read nor, so far as I have been able to ascertain, conflicts with any other form of response. Analogizing supplies additional evidence of the power of fiction to affect us simultaneously in many ways, and to engage us personally.

—Simon O. Lesser
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Comment and Correspondence

Professor Caroline Shrodes, Chairman of the Language Arts Division of the San Francisco State College, and a new and interested subscriber-member, writes to give us, inter alia, some specific information about courses offered at that college, which should be added to the listing begun in Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 8-9:

... I am very much interested in the fact that the Modern Language Association has become aware of significant areas of research in the field of literature and psychology. I shall be glad to have you quote our catalogue description of English 140, a course listed under the Humanities Division, but taught by me or a member of my staff.

[English 140. Psychological Insights in Literature: Reading of fiction and drama focusing on psychological concepts. Human motivation and behavior analyzed in relation to the physical heritage, the family, and social and economic pressures.]

You probably would also be interested in the Summer Session listing of English 230, The Dynamics of Reading.

[English 230. Seminar in the Dynamics of Reading: A study of theories related to techniques and levels of reading. The relation of modern perception theory to the mechanisms of identification, projection, and catharsis in reading is emphasized. Practice is given in the critical appraisal of significant reading materials, and attention is paid to the therapeutic values of literature. Designed especially for teachers who are concerned with developing students' power of comprehension, discrimination, and enjoyment.]

The course, The Dynamics of Reading, grew out of my research in bibliotherapy, the subject of my doctoral dissertation. This represents the first attempt to establish a theoretical basis for bibliotherapy and to present a clinical-experimental study. The dissertation, still unpublished, is available for borrowing at the University of California at Berkeley, both in bound copies and in microfilm. You are probably familiar with an anthology I edited entitled Psychology through Literature published by Oxford University Press. This book is used as one of the texts in English 140 described above.

Along similar lines is this brief excerpt from a note from Professor Austin B. Wood of the Department of Psychology at Brooklyn College, N. Y.

... I have a hunch I may find the newsletter useful in connection with a course I teach in the psychology of motivation, using case histories, biography, and literature.

Dr. Ruth R. Adams, whose recent dissertation on the imagery of Dickens is referred to in the bibliography, writes on the vexing question of the use of technical terms from psychology in the writing of literary criticism.

I believe that although my study is not directly psychoanalytical, its conclusions are ones that only an analytically oriented person would be likely to reach. . . .

My own feeling about the psychological interpretation of literature is that it provides the best tool for relating literature to living, and this relationship I consider to be the most vital concern for us as teachers and critics. Such interpretation may or may not make use of psychoanalytical terminology. In such a work as yours [Manheim -- The Dickens Pattern] such use is

indispensable, but Roy Basler's Sex, Symbolism, and Psychology in Literature, for example, after the introduction uses the technique and the understanding, but very little of the terminology. Basler states that his aim is to explain what the work under discussion really means and that he believes such explanation to be the critic's most important function. This understanding is the vital thing. Wayne Burns, too, has it in his paper on Jane Eyre. But I have read some psychoanalytical criticism loaded with terminology which completely lacks the fundamental understanding. Applying the terms intellectually—from the outside, as it were—is, I think, the greatest pitfall connected with the method. I have mentioned this subject particularly because in the last news letter you asked for reactions to this matter. . . .

An excerpt from a letter from Dr. William J. Ford, written nearly a year ago on another matter, now strikes us as being particularly pertinent to Miss Adams's comment.

Once, before the War, a group of doctors, their wives, some young business men used to meet to listen to symphonic music. It was informal enough, but one evening one of the young wives attempted to apply, rigidly, the Sonata Form to movements where it did not belong at all. What amazed me was how the idea could have been formed at all and been politely received by anyone who had listened to music and taken Music Appreciation I. The moral is for those who write about literature in terms of psychoanalysis: we cannot rigidly fit literature into the sonata-form of psychology.

With the following summation from Mr. Lesser we shall consider the subject temporarily closed:

. . . Is there any justification then for introducing technical terms from psychoanalysis into our discussion, terms which in some cases have unpleasant connotations?

In dealing with this question, as in dealing with many others, we should be careful to distinguish between reading and criticism. A knowledge of psychoanalysis is clearly not indispensable for reading fiction with understanding and enjoyment. But, like any other body of learning or experience, such knowledge may enrich our immediate response. And it is of undoubted value, it seems to me, in the critical task of accounting for our response. First of all, when we identify psychoanalytic issues of elements in a story, we simultaneously help to explain the appeal of the story; the analytic word is at once a comment on the book and the reader. Secondly, a knowledge of the psychoanalytic issues dealt with in a particular work permits a much more systematic dissection of it than would otherwise be possible. Finally, psychoanalytic concepts cannot fail to suggest new connections between literature and our own experience and between literature and other phenomena subject to analytic investigation, including myths, dreams, fantasies and wit.

Bibliography (XI)

A recent dissertation:

Ruth Robertson Adams - A Study of Dickens's Imagery (University of Maryland, manuscript, 1953).

Imagery is defined and classified according to the system expounded in Wellek and Warren's Theory of Literature. The entire body of Dickens's fiction is then carefully combed over, and examples of various levels of imagery are indicated, as well as persistent images peculiar to the writer (and hence revelatory so far as his personality and art are concerned), which are analyzed in general and within the framework of the novels in which they occur.

Professor William H. F. Lamont of Rutgers has called our attention to another work along somewhat similar lines:

J. Hillis Miller - Dickens' Symbolic Imagery (Harvard, manuscript, 1952).

Here the author covers six novel in great detail.

The confusion which exists in the critical attitude toward the "scientific" validity of psychodynamic theories and of their use in literary criticism and other fields is evidenced in one issue of the London Times Literary Supplement, for March 13, 1953. Here, although the anonymity of the reviewers is said to indicate some sort of uniform editorial policy in the journal as a whole, there is a review of

Herbert Read - The True Voice of Feeling. Studies in English Romantic Poetry (London, 1953)

which praises Sir Herbert's defence of Shelley against the attacks of Matthew Arnold and T. S. Eliot, saying,

Certainly, he [Sir Herbert] says, Shelley was immature; moreover he was an unconscious and self-absorbed homosexual, who had fantasies about incest, and recurrent delusions of persecution; he was incapable of taking a permanent interest in other people, or an objective view of the world; he lived in a universe of projections; and that is why he is such a good poet of his kind. Shelley's psychosis is, for Sir Herbert, the ground of his special gifts. . . . Thus when we know in one sense "the worst" about Shelley, we are in a position to appreciate the best. . . . Mental illnesses themselves can be processes of integration; they can enable the individual to reflect in himself, and if he is an artist to symbolize for others, processes of division, and attempts to transcend division, that are general in society. (P. 168)

The reviewer goes on to praise Sir Herbert's "gift for establishing fruitful connexions between purely critical ideas and the disciplines of psychology" in his essays on Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, and Byron. Yet, in the same issue, another reviewer, commenting on

W. Ronald D. Fairbairn - Psychoanalytic Studies of the Personality (London, 1953),

complains that psychoanalysis "has far to go before its theories can be submitted to the kind of controlled scrutiny which is regarded as a sine qua non

of experimental science". And in the very next column (p. 173) a review of a work by a priest who attempts a synthesis between Roman Catholic dogma and the theories of Jung,

Victor White - God and the Unconscious. With a Foreword by C. G. Jung and an Appendix by Gebhard Frei (London, 1953),

contains the assertion that "Jung, in spite of his frequent protestations to the contrary, has never expressed his findings in such a form that they could be scientifically validated," not, at least to the extent that Freud has done!

And finally, in a review of

Franz Wedekind - Five Tragedies of Sex. Translated by Frances Fawcett and Stephen Spender, with an introduction by Lion Feuchtwanger (London, 1953),

the reviewer proclaims (at page 171) that "this translation comes 50 years too late, at a time when Mrs. Grundy is at her last gasp and fifth-formers play at shuttlecock with the Freudian libido."

The notice about LITERATURE AND PSYCHOLOGY which was carried in a recent issue of The American Psychologist produced a large quantity of mail, including certain interesting communications and publications from abroad, among them the following monograph:

Léon Litwinski - La Psychologie et la Littérature. Leçon faite à l'Institut des Hautes Etudes de l'Académie des Sciences de Lisbonne, le 21 avril, 1944. (Published as a pamphlet of 29 pages at Coimbra, Portugal, in 1944.)

The author, a Belgian citizen, has had a remarkable career as economist, diplomat, and scholar in the fields of psychology and literature. His works in these fields have been published in journals in the United States, Great Britain, Portugal, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. The present monograph, however, has an oddly old-fashioned ring to it. Its concept of psychology is fundamentally what we would call in this country "academic" and hardly at all psychodynamic. Its entire attitude toward "modern" psychology is concerned with an attempt to establish its proper linking to the field of philosophy, — not too closely allied nor yet too distant. In its literary associations the author stresses the point that the creative writer studies en détail manifestations of the human personality which the psychologist studies en gros. He seems to consider modern French literature largely in terms of the late nineteenth century concepts of Paul Bourget. Although the author is a Belgian national speaking to a Portuguese audience, his work is a paean on French education, French concepts in psychology, and French literature.

At the request of Dr. Litwinski, Dr. Rosa Katz, widow of the late Dr. David Katz, sent us a briefer article along somewhat similar lines,

David Katz - "Die Psychologie als Mittlerin zwischen den Naturwissenschaften und den Geisteswissenschaften," Studium Generale, 6. Jahrg., Heft 7, Juli, 1953, pp. 403-409.

Dr. Katz, who seems to have been prominent in psychology in Germany, later taught at a Swedish university. His paper seems to have been read (in German) before a Swedish society interested in philosophy. As might be

expected, therefore, the paper is largely philosophical in orientation. His definition of psychology is the broadest we have yet seen:

Die Psychologie zu definieren ist durchaus keine leichte und dankenswerte Aufgabe, es bleibt uns aber nichts anders übrig als uns an ihr zu versuchen. Und so möchte ich empfehlen, die Psychologie als einen Teil der philosophischen Anthropologie zu definieren, und zwar als denjenigen, der es mit dem menschlichen Verhalten zu tun hat. (P. 403)

The author then proceeds to show the mutual services that psychology can render to and secure from various branches of the natural sciences. His examples are taken from laboratory and experimental psychology, and he seems to have little use for more dynamic concepts. He finally reaches the field of literature, after he has spoken of the service rendered by psychology to art in negating a certain art-historian's theory that El Greco's forms were due to his astigmatism, and he devotes one paragraph to literary matters, disposing of the entire field of our special interest as follows:

Nach dem, was über bildende Kunst gesagt worden ist, können wir uns hinsichtlich des Verhältnisses zwischen Psychologie und Literaturgeschichte kürzer fassen. Auch der Literaturgeschichtler arbeitet auf weite Strecken psychographisch resp. pathographisch, auch ist er dem Kunstwerk analytisch zugewandt. Unter dem Einfluss Freuds ist diese Analyse häufig auf Psychoanalyse reduziert worden. In Skandinavien sind es zwei grosse gestalten, die den Literaturgeschichtler immer wieder zu Untersuchungen eingeladen haben, das sind Kierkegaard und Strindberg; kein Wunder, es werden sich schwer Autoren aufreiben lassen, die mehr komplexgeladen waren als diese zwei. (P. 407)

His conclusion bears greater promise for future investigations such as ours than does his account of prior relationships. (Because of its special usefulness for us. I have translated it.)

To sum up, psychology takes its position as a mid-point between natural science and the humanities both through its methods and its attitude, and thereby it realizes its mission to play an intermediary role between the two. That is not to say that psychology wishes to assume a commanding position over other branches of learning in the light of its "psychologizing." Psychology achieves its greatest significance more as a branch of philosophical anthropology and from its realization that all science is more or less humanly directed. This observation leads to the corollary that we must beware of undesirable, one-sided development in our field, and must guard against the hostilities entailed by the ever-growing differentiation of science and scientific specialties. And the positive side of this warning is that we should never forget our responsibility as scholars whose research lies in the field of mankind. (Trans. from p. 409)

We acknowledge with thanks an excellent brief article submitted by two contributors:

Mark Kanzer - "Writers and the Early Loss of Parents," Journal of the Hillside Hospital, Vol. II, No. 3 (July, 1953), 148-151.

Dr. Kanzer points out that "a striking number of writers lost one or both parents quite early in life (six, or younger)—Poe, the Brontës, George

Sand, Swift, Rousseau, Tolstoy, Baudelaire, Hawthorne, Byron, Dante, Dumas père, etc. . . . The writers mentioned. . . reveal certain recurrent features. . . Mystic experiences, sinister environments, sadomasochistic ambivalence, perversions, overpowering compulsions, hallucinations and paranoid fantasies abound in their works. Identification with the dead parent, and a struggle against this identification—necessitated by the very need for survival—apparently accounts for much of these tendencies, including the suicidal and murderous drives. The alienation from reality—marked by drug addiction, hallucinations, narcissistic as compared to object love, and a universe dominated by projected moods—attests to persistent fixation of the ego on an early infantile level which is perhaps associated with actual memories of the dead parent." (Pp. 148, 150)

One of the rare instance of a psychodynamic approach to a literary class in the pages of a standard scholarly journal in the field is

Simon O. Lesser - "A Note on Pamela," College English, Vol. 14, No. 1 (October, 1952), 13-17.

"Mr. B." is seen as a "kind of father image," both "father" and "elder brother" in the double thread of an unconscious incestuous pattern. "Pamela is not only, or primarily, the slightly ridiculous story of a too-proper young girl resisting the importunities of her master; it is the story of a young girl hoping that seemingly insuperable obstacles can be overcome so that, legitimately and permanently, she can win the man she loves." (P. 15).

Finally, let us add a study we have overlooked, written by an eminent psychiatrist who has made genuine contributions to the study of American literature,

Clarence P. Oberndorf - "Psychoanalytic Insights of Hawthorne," Psychoanalytic Review, XXIX, 1942.

ADDITIONS TO THE SUBSCRIPTION LIST AS OF SEPTEMBER 20

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